

Message Text

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ACTION EUR-25

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 AID-20 CEA-02 CIAE-00 COME-00 EB-11

FRB-02 INR-10 NSAE-00 RSC-01 CIEP-02 SPC-03 STR-08

TRSE-00 LAB-06 SIL-01 OMB-01 DODE-00 PM-07 H-03 L-03

NSC-10 PA-04 PRS-01 SS-20 USIA-15 ACDA-19 IO-14 DRC-01

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R 021853Z NOV 73

FM AMEMBASSY LONDON

TO SECSTATE WASHDC 5316

INFO AMEMBASSY BONN

AMEMBASSY BRUSSELS

AMEMBASSY COPENHAGEN

AMEMBASSY DUBLIN

AMEMBASSY LUXEMBOURG

AMEMBASSY PARIS

AMEMBASSY ROME

AMEMBASSY THE HAGUE

USMISSION EC BRUSSELS

USMISSION OECD PARIS

UNCLAS LONDON 12863

E.O. 11652: N/A

TAGS: EGEN, EEC, UK

SUBJECT: HEATH INTERVIEW ON THE BENEFITS OF EC
MEMBERSHIP

1. IN A LONG INTERVIEW PUBLISHED IN "THE GUARDIAN" ON
NOVEMBER 2, PRIME MINISTER HEATH DESCRIBES THE WAYS IN
WHICH BRITAIN IS BENEFITTING FROM MEMBERSHIP IN THE
EUROPEAN COMMUNITY. HE ALSO OUTLINES HMG'S APPROACH TO
CERTAIN EC ISSUES. WE ARE FORWARDING THE FULL TEXT OF
THIS INTERVIEW BY AIRGRAM. THE FOLLOWING IS A SUMMARY
OF SOME OF THE MAIN POINTS.

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2. HEATH NOTES THAT BUSINESS CONFIDENCE IN THE UK IS GROWING AS A RESULT OF EC MEMBERSHIP. INVESTMENT HAS INCREASED, ALONG WITH BRITAIN'S EXPORTS TO THE REST OF THE COMMUNITY. AFTER DESCRIBING THE IMPORTANCE OF THE COMMUNITY IN THE WORLD ECONOMY, HEATH SAYS THAT THE "GREATEST BENEFIT OF ALL" IS THE FACT THAT BRITAIN HAS A STRONG VOICE IN EC DECISIONS. "IF WE WERE TO PULL OUT, THE COMMUNITY WOULD BE SHOCKED, DISAPPOINTED AND FRANKLY BAFFLED. BUT IT WOULD NOT BREAK UP OR COME TO A HALT. IT WOULD GO ON MAKING DECISIONS, WE WOULD GO ON BEING AFFECTED BY THEM, BUT WE WOULD HAVE NO PART IN MAKING THEM. IN SHORT, WE SHOULD LOOK REMARKABLY SILLY. AND ON ITS OWN OUR VOICE IN WORLD AFFAIRS WOULD BECOME INCREASINGLY INEFFECTIVE."

3. ON SPECIFIC EC ISSUES, HEATH SAID HE COULD NOT SAY WHAT FORM AN EC ENERGY POLICY SHOULD TAKE, "BUT THE AIM MUST BE TO SECURE SO FAR AS POSSIBLE FOR ALL THE COUNTRIES OF THE EEC A STABLE AND ECONOMIC SUPPLY." HEATH STRESSED THAT HIGH FOOD PRICES ARE THE RESULT OF WORLD MARKET TRENDS, NOT OF EC MEMBERSHIP. HE SAID THAT BRITAIN WOULD BE PRESSING FOR CHANGES IN THE CAP IN ORDER TO ENSURE THAT IT PAYS MORE REGARD TO THE NEEDS OF THE CONSUMER, AND IN ORDER TO ELIMINATE THE RISK OF RUNNING UP EXPENSIVE SURPLUSES. HEATH SAID THAT THE UK WANTS TO SEE THE EC REGIONAL DEVELOPMENT FUND ENOUGH RESOURCES TO MAKE A SIGNIFICANT IMPACT FROM THE OUTSET ON THE PROBLEM AREAS OF THE COMMUNITY. WITH REGARD TO POWERS FOR THE EUROPEAN PARLIAMENT, HEATH SAYS THAT AN INCREASE IN ITS POWERS SHOULD OCCUR BEFORE DIRECT ELECTIONS.

4. THE COMMUNITY IS A "LIVING ENTITY," HEATH CONCLUDES. IT CAN BE CHANGED AND IMPROVED. BRITAIN IS "IN THE PROCESS OF RESHAPING THE COMMUNITY, WITH OUR PARTNERS, INTO SOMETHING BIGGER, BROADER AND BETTER THAN THE COMMON MARKET WE JOINED.

5. COMMENT. SINCE BRITAIN JOINED THE COMMUNITY AT THE BEGINNING OF THIS YEAR, THE ANTI-MARKETEERS IN THE UNCLASSIFIED

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LABOUR PARTY HAVE BEEN TIRELESS IN THEIR ATTEMPTS TO DISPARAGE THE COMMUNITY. IT IS CLEAR FROM HIS SPEECH AT BLACKPOOL ON OCTOBER 13 (SEE LONDON 11914) AND FROM THIS INTERVIEW THAT THE PRIME MINISTER IS NOW BEGINNING TO PUT THE GOVERNMENT'S CASE BEFORE THE PEOPLE BY DESCRIBING THE BENEFITS OF MEMBERSHIP, AND BY DEMONSTRATING WHY WITHDRAWAL FROM THE COMMUNITY IS NOT A VIABLE OPTION.

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Message Attributes

Automatic Decaptioning: X
Capture Date: 01 JAN 1994
Channel Indicators: n/a
Current Classification: UNCLASSIFIED
Concepts: ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT, SPEECHES, FOREIGN POLICY POSITION, MEETINGS, CURRENCY CONTROLS
Control Number: n/a
Copy: SINGLE
Draft Date: 02 NOV 1973
Decaption Date: 01 JAN 1960
Decaption Note:
Disposition Action: n/a
Disposition Approved on Date:
Disposition Authority: n/a
Disposition Case Number: n/a
Disposition Comment:
Disposition Date: 01 JAN 1960
Disposition Event:
Disposition History: n/a
Disposition Reason:
Disposition Remarks:
Document Number: 1973LONDON12863
Document Source: CORE
Document Unique ID: 00
Drafter: n/a
Enclosure: n/a
Executive Order: N/A
Errors: N/A
Film Number: n/a
From: LONDON
Handling Restrictions: n/a
Image Path:
ISecure: 1
Legacy Key: link1973/newtext/t19731159/aaaabrbk.tel
Line Count: 117
Locator: TEXT ON-LINE
Office: ACTION EUR
Original Classification: UNCLASSIFIED
Original Handling Restrictions: n/a
Original Previous Classification: n/a
Original Previous Handling Restrictions: n/a
Page Count: 3
Previous Channel Indicators:
Previous Classification: n/a
Previous Handling Restrictions: n/a
Reference: n/a
Review Action: RELEASED, APPROVED
Review Authority: garlanwa
Review Comment: n/a
Review Content Flags:
Review Date: 08 AUG 2001
Review Event:
Review Exemptions: n/a
Review History: RELEASED <08-Aug-2001 by maustmc>; APPROVED <23-Aug-2001 by garlanwa>
Review Markings:

Declassified/Released
US Department of State
EO Systematic Review
30 JUN 2005

Review Media Identifier:
Review Referrals: n/a
Review Release Date: n/a
Review Release Event: n/a
Review Transfer Date:
Review Withdrawn Fields: n/a
Secure: OPEN
Status: NATIVE
Subject: HEATH INTERVIEW ON THE BENEFITS OF EC MEMBERSHIP
TAGS: EGEN, UK, EEC, (HEATH)
To: STATE
Type: TE
Markings: Declassified/Released US Department of State EO Systematic Review 30 JUN 2005